

Department of State - Global Affairs

Program Office: Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Kabul, Afghanistan
Funding Opportunity Title: **Radio Programming for 2012-2013**
Announcement Type: Grant
Funding Opportunity Number: SCAKAB-12-AW-017-SCA-07312012
Deadline for Applications: August 30, 2012
CFDA 19.501- Public Diplomacy Programs for Afghanistan and Pakistan

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is open to all U.S., Afghan, and international organizations or companies with direct experience in Afghanistan's media environment and a proven track record of success implementing projects in Afghanistan.

Cost Sharing or Matching

This program does not require cost sharing.

Other Special Eligibility Criteria

Not Applicable.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- A) For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726.
- B) For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact **Cynthia Rafferty**, Grants Manager, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Kabul, Afghanistan, at:
Email: KabulPDProposals@state.gov (*Preferred method of communication*)

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan is pleased to announce an open competition for assistance awards through this Request for Proposals (RFP). PAS anticipates issuing multiple awards under this Funding Opportunity. PAS Kabul invites all eligible organizations to submit a proposal or set of proposals for some or all of the radio broadcast concepts outlined below. Programs should be in both Dari and Pashto wherever possible, and proposals must specify the language(s) to be used in the broadcasts.

Specific concepts include programming on issues important to women and their families, and to the critical importance of sustained women's involvement, across sectors and across regions, to building a stronger future for Afghanistan.

Topics for programming include: the importance of women's involvement and participation in the 2014 Afghan elections; the key role that women can play in decision making across all sectors of Afghan society (business, civil society, government); women's experience in other Islamic countries with respect to working toward greater women's participation and voice in that context; as well as other programming concepts developed by the organizations submitting proposals. General concepts encompass series focusing on development of skills for women's effective participation in Afghan economy, civil society, government and philanthropic sectors, including advice on leadership skills, public speaking, time management, entrepreneurship, business concepts, job hunting, and business education.

A successful proposal shall include, at least:

- A detailed budget and accompanying budget narrative for the Program;
- Sample weekly themes to be featured in the Program or script outlines;
- Resumes of key personnel, including the Program's on-air hosts;
- Discussion of how the Program will encourage audience participation, feedback from and interaction with its listeners;
- The times and radio stations on which the Program will be broadcast, and the audience it is expected to reach;
- Discussion of the specific attitudes and opinions the Program aims to influence; and
- A Plan for independent, third-party evaluation of the effectiveness of the Program on influencing the attitudes and opinions identified in the Proposal, and the size and demographics of the audience reached by the Program.

Priority consideration will be given to proposals whose radio programming reaches the south of Afghanistan.

II. BACKGROUND

Objectives

Proposals should address some or all of these distinct activities:

- Promoting the value of women's voices and contributions in all sectors of society
- Women's critical role in elections and the electoral process as voters, and candidates,
- Women's critical role in business development and entrepreneurship,
- Women's critical role in building a secure and lasting peace in Afghanistan and the region,
- Discouraging violence and extremism,
- Preparing Afghan society for transition,
- The importance of education from the primary to the university level,
- Fair and equitable treatment of women within the family
- Women's health
- Promoting Afghan unity
- Afghanistan constitution and the legal rights of women

III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility is open to all U.S., Afghan, and international organizations or companies with direct experience in radio programming and broadcast, and a proven track record of success implementing projects in Afghanistan (see "Eligibility" on page 1). Non-Afghan organizations or companies are required to partner with an Afghan organization or company.

Applicants are not required to include funding from other donors. However, applications that include additional in-kind and/or cash contributions from non-U.S. Government sources will be more competitive, since cost-sharing demonstrates a strong commitment to the planned activities and will be considered to show greater cost effectiveness.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Award Period: up to 12 months.

Anticipated Number of Awards: 3

Award Amount: The award ceiling is set at \$230,000 per award.

Application Submission Process: Applicants must submit proposals electronically using Grants.gov **or** submit proposals to PAS Kabul directly at: KabulPDProposals@state.gov. Thorough instructions on the Grants.gov application process are available at <http://www.grants.gov>. For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726. For questions about this solicitation, contact Cynthia Rafferty, Grants Manager, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Kabul, Afghanistan, at:

Email: KabulPDProposals@state.gov (*Preferred method of communication*)

Application Deadline: All applications must be submitted on or before August 30, 2012, 11:59 p.m. eastern time. Applications submitted after 11:59 p.m. will be ineligible for consideration. **Begin the application process early**, as this will allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise in advance of the deadline. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

All applicants utilizing Grants.gov must register with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application. **Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, it could take as long as two weeks to have the registration validated and confirmed. Please begin the registration process immediately to ensure that the process is completed well in advance of the deadline for applications.** Until that process is complete, you will not be issued a user password for Grants.gov, which is required for application submission. There are four steps that you must complete before you are able to register: (1) Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (if your organization does not have one already) by calling 1-866-705-5711; (2) Register with Central Contractor Registry (CCR); (3) Register yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (4) Be authorized as an AOR by your organization. For more information, go to www.grants.gov. Please note that your CCR registration must be annually renewed. Failure to renew your CCR registration may prohibit submission of a grant application through Grants.gov.

Application Content: Applicants must follow the RFP instructions and conditions contained herein and supply all information required. **Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will result in disqualification from the competition.** Applicants must set forth full, accurate, and complete information as required by this RFP. The penalty for making false statements in proposals to the USG is prescribed on 18 U.S.C.1001.

Proposals may not exceed 10 double-spaced pages in 12-point, Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. This requirement excludes the allowable appendices, which are identified in Section 3 below. The proposal must consist of the following:

1 - Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424):

This form can be found on-line at:

http://fa.statebuy.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68.

2 – Proposal Narrative

a. - Abstract:

The abstract is limited to 300 words in length. It must provide a summary of the project to be undertaken, expected timeline, and cost.

b. – Implementation Plan:

The applicant must specify the goals and objectives of the project. The steps involved -- from design to broadcast to monitoring and evaluation -- should be described in

sufficient detail to show how objectives and goals will be met. This section should also describe how success will be measured via performance indicators. This section must include a time-task plan that clearly identifies the objectives and major activities.

c. - Organizational Capability:

Applications must include a clear description of the applicant's management structure, previous experience with radio production in Afghanistan, experience working with Afghan government institutions, and the organizational experience and background in Afghanistan related to the proposed activities. Besides information about the organization as a whole, this section must also identify the proposed management structure and staffing plan for the proposed project.

3 - Appendices:

The proposal submission must include the following appendices. Only the appendices listed below may be included as part of the application:

- (a) **Budget (Required)** – the budget must identify the total amount of funding requested, with a breakdown of amounts to be spent in the following budget categories: personnel; fringe benefits; travel; equipment; supplies; consultants/contracts; other direct costs; and indirect costs. The budget may not exceed 1 page in length. Applicants must also include a budget narrative. A minimum of 5 percent of the overall cost should be budgeted for monitoring and evaluation by an external organization.
- (b) **Resume (Required)** – a resume, not to exceed 1 page in length, must be included for the proposed key staff person, such as the Project Director. If an individual for this type of position has not been identified, the applicant may submit a 1-page position description, identifying the qualifications and skills required for that position, in lieu of a resume.
- (c) **Letters of Intent or Other Proof of Ability to Broadcast (Required)-**
Applicants that do not have costs budgeted for broadcasting or are not themselves broadcasters must include letter(s) of intent from radio broadcasters, outlining the broadcaster's commitment to air the content free of charge.

V. AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA

Evaluation Criteria: Applicants should note that the following criteria (1) serve as a standard against which all proposals will be evaluated, and (2) serve to identify the significant matters that should be addressed in all proposals. The USG will award grants to the applicants whose offers represent the best value to the USG on the basis of technical merit and cost.

Each application will be evaluated by a peer review committee of Department of State and other experts, as deemed appropriate. The evaluation criteria have been tailored to the requirements of this RFP.

- **Project Goals/Implementation Plan (40 points):** Applicants should describe what they propose to do and how they will do it. The proposed activities must directly relate to meeting the goals and objectives, and applicants should include information on how they will measure activities' effectiveness. The review panel will be viewing the implementation plan in terms of how well it addresses the stated need for monitoring and evaluation, relevance of the goals and objectives, and feasibility of the proposed activities and their timeline for completion.
- **Organizational Capability (40 points):** Proposals should demonstrate the ability to develop and produce broadcast content and programming in Dari and Pashto. Applicants must demonstrate how their resources, capabilities, and experience will enable them to achieve the stated goals and objectives. In addition, applicants should describe how and with whom they will collaborate to meet project goals.
- **Appendices (20 points):**
 - **Budget:** Costs shall be evaluated for realism, control practices, and efficiency. The Department of State must determine that the costs paid for this award are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed project activities. This will consist of a review of the Budget to determine if the overall costs are realistic for the work to be performed, if the costs reflect the applicant's understanding of the allowable cost principles established by OMB Circular A-122, and if the costs are consistent with the program narrative. A minimum of five percent of the budget should be allocated for external monitoring.
 - **Resume:** The review panel will consider the appropriateness of the selected project director, in view of the role and responsibility that person will play in guiding the project through implementation to completion. Position descriptions submitted in lieu of the resume will be reviewed for the appropriateness of the qualifications and skills identified.
 - **Letters of Intent Other Proof of Ability to Broadcast:** The review panel will consider the types and depth of relationships that the applicant has with local organizations and/or radio broadcasters. The panel will also review the letters to determine the willingness of local organizations and radio broadcasters to participate in the effort, and that all parties have an understanding of their unique roles and responsibilities in terms of the proposed project.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Award Notices: The grant shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is the Government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the Recipient through email transmission. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

Anticipated Time to Award: Applicants should expect to be notified if their proposal has been selected for award within 45 days after the submission deadline. PAS Kabul will provide information at the point of notification about any modification to the proposal or plan of work that will be required to finalize the grant(s).

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

- **Reporting Requirements:** Grantees are required to submit quarterly program progress and financial reports throughout the project period. Progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final programmatic and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period.

VII. DISCLAIMER

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the Department of State.